

INCIDENT REPORT

Fishermen Evacuated Near Grand Isle Shipyard
Wednesday, May 26, 2010

At approximately 6pm, the US Coast Guard (USCG) safety representative for the Houma Incident Command Post (ICP) notified AD Rivera of a report of crew members on vessels operating near Grand Isle Shipyard reporting illness and being evacuated to an area hospital. BP and USCG invoked the MC252 protocol for Industrial Hygiene Exposure Investigation. AD Rivera accompanied USCG Assistant Safety Officer and a BP Representative to Grand Isle Shipyard in Venice, LA to investigate. In addition to these persons, industrial hygienists from CTEH were dispatched to the area to conduct an exposure assessment and take measurements of any potential exposures.

Upon arrival at the shipyard at approximately 9:40pm, investigating personnel interviewed the remaining crew of the vessels *Windsong* and *Mom & Dad*.

Mom & Dad

(b) (6) stated that his vessel, *Mom & Dad*, was in the South Pass on Tuesday, May 25, 2010, assigned to Task Force 2. The *Mom & Dad* had been operating in the area for approximately 20 days driving through oil to mix and break it up.

The *Mom & Dad* had been ordered to meet the 'flotel' or floating hotel vessel where crews are housed in the Gulf of Mexico (GoM). The vessel entered the sound near the south pass and (b) (6) stated that the entire sound seemed full of what he described as dispersed oil; a reddish-brown substance he described as resembling "cake mix; which had a distinct chemical odor. The captain closed all vessel windows and doors and remained inside the cabin. The vessel ran for 4 to 5 hours through the sound. During this time, his two crew members, (b) (6) and (b) (6), at various times went on deck to smoke or use the telephone. (b) (6) reportedly stayed out on deck for a longer duration than (b) (6).

(b) (6) stated that he remained inside the vessel cabin. After the 4 to 5-hour run, the vessel received information regarding an impending storm in the area. The vessel stopped at that point and dropped anchor. (b) (6) stated that all crew members, including himself, had headaches and felt queasy at this point. They prepared for the storm and went to sleep aboard the vessel.

The next morning, following the storm, much of the material in the sound had been cleared by the storm. (b) (6) stated that he felt fine in the morning, no headache or queasy feeling, but his two crew members still reported headaches and that they "did not feel good". Although not reported directly to (b) (6), he stated that he suspected the crew members felt queasy because the crew usually cooks meals but no one



cooked that day. It took about 2-hours to reach the flotel. The boat was loaded with boom at the flotel and the vessel subsequently left the flotel.

One crew member reported a “splitting headache” to (b) (6) the other crew member reported a headache as well and (b) (6) told both to go to bed. He relayed the condition of his crew to the lead vessel, the motor vessel Hilton. The Hilton ordered the *Mom & Dad* to stop and relay its coordinates. They were told a medic team was being dispatched. The medic team arrived and the two crew members were air lifted for transport to a hospital. (b) (6) piloted the *Mom & Dad* to Grand Isle shipyard and was examined by medical personnel. He stated that he was told he had high blood pressure.

(b) (6) stated that he had experienced no similar symptoms during his spill response activities prior to May 25, 2010. He stated that, usually, when moving through similar material, he closes the doors and windows to the vessel and stays inside. He had never seen dispersant spraying. He reported that the first few days of the vessel spill response task they ran through oil but after that the vessel had mostly encountered sheen and did not experience any smell. May 25, the smell was reportedly very strong. The day after the storm, the material was blown away and he reported seeing sea animals, including minnows and porpoise in the sound. During the incident time, (b) (6) reported that the entire crew had eaten the same food items on board.

(b) (6) reported that he had been contacted by multiple members of the media regarding this incident.

Windsong

(b) (6) of the vessel *Windsong*, complained of headache, diarrhea and dizziness. He stated that Tuesday, May 25, 2010, a strong chemical smell was particularly bad. He and his crew started feeling sick while out to sea after they smelled the chemical odor they described as “bad Chlorox” when they encountered a reddish material they termed “dispersement”.

Further interview with (b) (6) was conducted by USCG personnel and notes are currently unavailable.

Grand Isle Personnel

Members of the safety department at Grand Isle Shipyard were interviewed during this investigation. They reported the following vessels involved in the incident:

- *Lil Murray* – 2 crew members ill and transported (Captain and his son).
- *Mom & Dad* – 2 crew members ill and transported

- *Windsong* – 1 crew member ill and transported
- *Big Tattoo* – 1 crew member ill and transported
- *Macy Emily* – 1 crew member ill and transported

On Thursday, May 27, 2010, BP personnel reported that all seven crew members transported to the hospital were held overnight. In addition to hygienists performing monitoring and forensic analysis at Grand Isle Shipyard, industrial hygienists had been dispatched on similar Vessels of Opportunity to attempt sampling and other analysis of conditions in the area.

Contacts

Grand Isle shipyard contacts for this incident:

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